

Chapter 2

Management and Use of Information

INFORMATION RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PROCEDURAL DIRECTIVE

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2-1 Collections of Information

Overview

1. This chapter implements the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 concerning collections of information by establishing procedures for the review, evaluation, control, and use of collections of information conducted or sponsored by the Agency. The guidance in this chapter is designed to reduce, minimize and control burdens on the public to provide or disclose information. It is also designed to maximize the practical utility and public benefit of the information created, collected, disclosed, maintained, used, shared, and disseminated by or for FEMA. FEMA organizations will, to the extent practicable, acquire, use, and manage information technology to improve the Agency's ability to efficiently and effectively perform its missions and functions while reducing information collection costs and burdens on the public.
2. Section 3506(c) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, directs Federal agencies to establish processes that are sufficiently independent of program responsibilities, that they can fairly evaluate whether proposed collections of information are necessary for the performance of agency functions and should be approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). These processes include: a review of each collection of information for need; a functional description of the information to be collected; a plan for the collection of the information; a specific, objectively supported estimate of burden, as appropriate; a test of the collection of information through a pilot program (if used); and a plan for the efficient and effective management and use of the information to be collected, including necessary resources. The objectives of the review are: to ensure that proposed collections of information have practical utility; are the least burdensome to perform the Agency's functions; comply with legal requirements and achieve program objectives; do not duplicate of information otherwise accessible to FEMA; and minimizes the costs of collecting, processing, and using the information without shifting disproportionate costs or burdens on the public.
3. FEMA organizations may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information from more than 10 respondents unless the collection of information has been reviewed under the Agency's formal review process and approved by OMB.
4. OMB approved collections of information will be assigned an OMB control number and an expiration date.
5. All approved collections of information will display a currently valid OMB control number and expiration date. In addition, collections of information or their instructions, will inform potential respondents of the following: they do not have to respond to the collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number; the reasons the information is being collected, including how it will be used to further the proper performance of the Agency's functions; an estimate of the burden of the collection of information and a request for comments concerning the accuracy of the burden estimate and

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suggestions for reducing the burden; whether responses are voluntary, required or obtain or retain a benefit, or mandatory; and the nature and extent of confidentiality to be provided to the information being requested.

6. Once a collection of information is approved by OMB, FEMA organizations may not make modifications to the collection of information unless the modification has been coordinated with the FEMA Information Collections Officer and submitted to OMB for review and approval.
7. FEMA organizations may not use collections of information that display an expired expiration date.
8. FEMA may not impose a penalty on any respondent for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number or fails to inform the potential person who is to respond to the collection of information that they are not required to respond unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. When a collection of information is used to prove or satisfy a condition for the receipt of a benefit or the avoidance of a penalty, and does not display the OMB control number or inform respondents, the FEMA organization will not treat a person's failure to comply as grounds for withholding the benefit or imposing the penalty, but must permit respondents to prove or satisfy the legal conditions in any other reasonable manner.

Responsibility

1. The Chief Information Officer is responsible for:
 - Ensuring compliance with and implementation of information policies and information resources management responsibilities in this chapter to reduce information collection burdens on the public.
 - Ensuring a process to evaluate fairly whether proposed collections of information should be approved.
 - Designating the FEMA Information Collections Officer, under the direction of the Associate Director, Operations Support Directorate, to conduct such reviews and evaluations of and submit proposed collections of information and required certifications to OMB.
 - Improving the integrity, quality and utility of information to users within and outside the Agency.
 - Implementing common standards for the collection, storage, processing, and communications, including standards for security, interconnectivity, and interoperability.
2. The Associate Director, Operations Support Directorate, is responsible for:
 - Establishing and implementing Agency guidance for the collections of information review, submission and certification process; and

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- Implementing guidelines and procedures to protect the privacy and security of information created, collected or maintained by the Agency.
3. The Office of General Counsel is responsible for establishing guidelines and procedures to protect the privacy information created, collected or maintained by the Agency.
 4. The Associate Directors, Executive Associate Directors, Administrators, Executive Administrators, Inspector General, Regional Directors and other Office Directors are responsible for ensuring adherence to information collection policy and procedures.

Procedures

The FEMA Information Collections Officer will:

1. Conduct reviews and evaluations of all proposed collections of information consistent with the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 and OMB regulation 5 CFR 1320.
2. Certify that proposed collections of information are necessary for performing the functions of the agency, and submitting the proposed collections and certifications to OMB for approval.
3. Assess proposed collections of information for excessive or disproportionate burdens on the public and develop an Agency plan to minimize such burdens.
4. Annually or as required, develop in conjunction with FEMA organizations the Agency's Information Collection Budget and manage the ICB and burden hours imposed on the public.

FEMA Organizations will:

1. Obtain OMB approval before conducting, or sponsoring the conduct of, a collection of information from ten or more respondents.
2. Follow the guidance and procedures in this chapter, and in FEMA Instruction 5300.1, FEMA Reports/Information Collections Management Program, to request OMB review and approval of a proposed collection of information.
3. Coordinate, in advance, proposed collections of information with the FEMA Information Collections Officer.
4. Plan well in advance for the development, use, design, printing and distribution of proposed new collections of information and for the continued need for and revisions to expiring collections of information to ensure timely review and processing by OMB. Under normal processing procedures, the OMB review and approval process takes a minimum of four months to complete. There are provisions for short-term approvals under OMB's "emergency" processing procedures. Unplanned, last minute requirements will delay your ability to use a proposed collection of information.
5. Provide notice to and otherwise consult with members of the public and affected agencies concerning each proposed collection of information to solicit comments. Use comments, as appropriate, to modify or otherwise finalize the proposed collection of information.

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6. Conduct periodic evaluations of the need for the collection of information to:
 - Ensure that the information is necessary for the proper performance of the Agency's missions and functions;
 - Reduce or eliminate the collection of duplicative information;
 - Use information technology to reduce burden and improve data quality, agency efficiency, and responsiveness to the public; and,
 - Ensure that information collected is relevant, accurate, valid, and reliable, and the organization has the ability to process the information it collects in a useful and timely manner.

Definition and Descriptions of Collections of Information

1. "Burden" means the value of the time, effort and financial resources expended by persons to generate, maintain, retain, disclose or provide information to or for a Federal agency. This includes reviewing instructions; developing, acquiring, installing and utilizing technology and systems for any of these purposes: training personnel, searching data sources, collecting data, completing and reviewing information collections, and transmitting or otherwise disclosing information.
2. "Collection of information" means the obtaining, causing to be obtained, soliciting, or requiring the disclosure to third parties or the public, of facts or opinions by or for any agency, **regardless of form or format**, calling for either (1) answers to identical questions posed to, or identical reporting or recordkeeping requirements imposed on 10 or more persons or organizations. Collections of Information include, but are not limited to, any requirement for persons to obtain, maintain, retain, report, or publicly disclose information. Collections of information refer to the **act** of collecting or disclosing information, to the **information** to be collected or disclosed, or to a **plan or instrument** calling for the collection or disclosure of information. Examples include:
 - Report Forms
 - Application Forms
 - Schedules
 - Questionnaires
 - Surveys, including customer service and program evaluation surveys
 - Directives (Circulars, Instructions, Bulletins, Manuals)
 - Reporting or Recordkeeping Requirements
 - Contracts, Cooperative Agreements, Grants
 - Policy Statements
 - Plans
 - Rules or Regulations
 - Planning Requirements
 - Interview Guides
 - Oral communication

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- Telegraphic, telephonic, or facsimile requests
- Requests for proposal or other procurement requirements
- Automated, electronic, mechanical or other technological collection techniques
- Standard questionnaires used to monitor compliance with Agency requirements
- Techniques or technological methods used to monitor compliance with agency requirements

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2-2 Access to Information Technology for Individuals with Disabilities

Overview

1. This chapter implements the procedures for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to establish an accessible information environment to ensure that individuals with disabilities may access and use information technology systems and services provided by FEMA for internal and external customers.
2. The establishment of accessible information environments is an important FEMA goal. Accessible information technology systems and services provides FEMA with a tool to:
 - Recruit the most qualified applicants;
 - Better utilize the skills of current employees; and
 - Improve the delivery of information services to all citizens.
3. Accessible information environments ensure that employees with disabilities receive equivalent and integrated information services, equipment, training, and technical support as those without disabilities. It also ensures that customers and citizens with disabilities will be able to access automated information services that are being developed by FEMA.

Responsibility

1. The Chief Information Officer (CIO) is responsible for ensuring that the requirements for accessibility to information technology, which is mandated in the Americans With Disabilities Act , 424 U.S.C. 12112 and related laws and regulations, are fully met by the Agency. The planning processes identified in Chapter 1-1 of this document must be supported. The CIO is responsible for:
 - Ensuring electronic office equipment access for current or prospective employees with disabilities;
 - Ensuring access of FEMA's public information resources to individuals with disabilities; and
 - Monitoring progress towards achieving electronic equipment accessibility goals.
2. Associate Directors, Administrators, Regional Directors, and Office Directors are responsible for:
 - Ensuring that employees are provided access to the information technology tools they require to perform their jobs, including access to FEMA information dissemination services such as the Intranet and electronic mail;
 - Ensuring that all employees are aware of the policy and procedures for providing accessibility to FEMA information technology resources;

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- Providing adaptive technology hardware, software and upgrades for employees to retain compatibility with the standard office automation suite.
 - Funding adaptive technology requirements for employees; and
 - Funding application programming to accommodate adaptive technology requirements resulting from automated business processes that impose information access restrictions on FEMA employees or the public.
3. The General Counsel, Office of the General Counsel, is responsible for interpreting the requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act and other pertinent legislation dealing with accessibility; and for ensuring that FEMA Offices, Administrations and Directorates fully understand and comply with these laws and regulations.
 4. The Director, Office of Emergency Information and Media Affairs is responsible for ensuring that information available for use by the public is accessible to individuals with disabilities.
 5. The Associate Director, Preparedness, Training and Exercises Directorate and the Administrator, U.S. Fire Administration are responsible for ensuring that:
 - Video-based media produced for instructional, training, or informational purposes will be captioned so the information presented is accessible to deaf and hard of hearing viewers;
 - Paper based training materials developed after November 1, 1996, are available in electronic and Braille formats for use by the blind and visually impaired.
 6. The Executive Associate Director, Operations Support Directorate, is responsible for ensuring that publications developed after November 1, 1996 are available in electronic and Braille formats for use by individuals with disabilities.
 7. System administrators, program developers, Internet Domain Webmasters and system designers are responsible for ensuring that the products they develop allow non-audio and non-graphical alternative accesses to information.

Procedures

1. At minimum, FEMA employees will have access to the standard FEMA office automation software, Intranet and Internet, telecommunications networks and telephone equipment and electronic mail systems. Employees with special requirements for sensory, cognitive, or mobility adaptive technology will be equipped with special peripherals or software that provide access to FEMA's information technology systems.
2. The Information Technology Services Directorate supports the use of the following services provided by other agencies:
 - Telecommunications devices for the deaf (TDD) numbers will be published in the FEMA Telephone Directory and made available to the General Services Administration for inclusion in the Federal TDD Directory.

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- The General Services Administration's Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) for providing voice to TDD relay services, allowing direct communications among those with and without speech, hearing, deaf and hard-of-hearing employees and public.
3. Requests for telecommunications related adaptive technology services will be made through the Local Ordering Official as outlined in Chapter 3-1, Purchasing via the Telecommunications Information Management Accounting and Control System. Requests are submitted on FEMA Form 85-51, Telecommunications Service Requests.
 4. Requests for information systems related adaptive technology will be purchased through the 40-1 process as outlined in Chapter 3-7, Purchasing Standardization Program.
 5. FEMA employees are encouraged to utilize GSA's Clearinghouse on Computer Accommodation (COCA) which provides assistance to agencies in all aspects of accessibility management, from demonstration of enhancement capabilities in a demonstration center to briefings that assist agencies establish their own support capabilities. COCA can be accessed at <http://www.gsa.gov/coca>.

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2-3 Records Maintenance and Electronic Recordkeeping

Overview

1. This chapter establishes the Agency's procedures for the creation, maintenance, use, dissemination and disposal of FEMA's official records, including electronic recordkeeping. The chapter also covers the safeguards to protect the accuracy, completeness, privacy and security of FEMA's electronic records. These procedures serve to supplement and support the policy and directives on records management implemented by the Associate Director for Operations Support.
2. Federal law requires FEMA to create and preserve official records documenting the Agency's organizations, functions, policy, and essential transactions, including those created and maintained on electronic media. Official records document and reflect the information necessary to ensure the management and accountability of agency programs and to protect both legal and financial rights of the Federal Government.
3. Government information and official records may be stored and retrieved in a variety of ways, but cost containment and public demand place increasing emphasis on the use of electronic media. FEMA's information systems, by definition, contain information that constitutes temporary or permanent agency records.
4. Federal policy for electronic data processing and recordkeeping now includes fostering public access to information maintained by and for Federal agencies. The policy extends to strengthening FEMA's partnerships with State and local governments by lessening their information burdens through improved dissemination and use of Federal data. The expanded responsibilities highlight the need for maximum uniformity and simplicity in maintaining and using agency records.
5. To help the public and agencies locate and access government information, the Executive Branch has established the Government Information Locator Service (GILS), consisting of decentralized agency-based information locator records and associated information services. FEMA must compile an inventory of its 1) locators that cover its information dissemination products, 2) automated information systems, and 3) Privacy Act systems of records. The inventories serve to increase the efficiency of the dissemination function and to avoid duplicative information collections. Inventories and locator aids are an important tool to identify the availability of public information and to assist agencies in carrying out their responsibilities to manage, schedule for disposition, and archive their official records. Records that are properly described in GILS will be properly described for records schedule, and vice versa.

Responsibilities

1. The Chief Information Officer is responsible for:
 - Minimizing the cost to the Agency for the creation, collection, maintenance, use, dissemination, and disposition of information.

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- Strengthening the partnership between FEMA and the State and local governments by minimizing the burden and maximizing the utility of information created, collected, maintained, used, disseminated, and retained by or for the Federal Government.
 - Enhancing public access to and dissemination of information, using electronic and other formats.
 - Instituting information technology standards for the collection, storage, processing and dissemination of electronic records, including standards for security, interconnectivity, and interoperability.
 - Implementing and enforcing procedures, including requirements for archiving information maintained in electronic format, particularly in the planning, design, and operation of information systems.
2. The Associate Director, Operations Support, is responsible for:
- Formulating policy and procedures and exercising supervision over FEMA's records management program.
 - Initiating actions and standards as may be necessary to ensure maximum uniformity and simplicity in maintaining and using agency records, including records in electronic format.
 - Designating FEMA's Records Officer to serve as liaison with the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) and to provide records management guidance and assistance to all organizational levels.
3. The Associate Directors, Executive Associate Directors, Administrator, Executive Administrator, Inspector General, Regional Directors, and other Office Directors are responsible for ensuring proper management and safeguards for Agency records by employees in their respective areas.

Procedures

1. Creation and Designation of FEMA's Official Records.
- FEMA officials and personnel are responsible for the establishment and safeguarding the Agency's official temporary and permanent records, including those on electronic media.
 - The development of public information and official records shall be consistent with FEMA's policy and records management directives.
 - The FEMA Records Officer shall make the final determination as to whether or not particular information or files constitute official records.

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- The FEMA Records Officer serves as liaison with NARA and other Federal departments and agencies relating to records management.
- The development and modification of all information systems shall incorporate the requirements and standards for records management, including the documentation of the information system itself.

2. Accessibility of FEMA's Public Information and Official Records.

- Information collection and retention shall enhance public access and dissemination of records and Federal data.
- Electronic records shall conform to agency and federal standards for interconnectivity and interoperability.
- For compatibility, FEMA shall use standard network terminology and voluntary, international standards for information search and retrieval when disseminating information to the public.
- Electronic records shall be labeled as to make the records accessible and convertible to a nonproprietary format.
- Records shall be easily accessible to any organizational units that use them for official purposes.
- FEMA's participation in the Government Information Locator Service (GILS) shall be used to manage FEMA's records, particularly electronic systems.

3. Maintenance of Temporary or Permanent Records.

- Records management controls shall be maintained to reduce excess paperwork burdens or duplication of data.
- FEMA officials and personnel shall implement appropriate records management practices to all records, irrespective of the media.
- Electronic recordkeeping shall be designed to simplify the maintenance and to expand the use of Agency records and Federal data, and shall be designed and used only on NARA approved systems.
- Records and files shall be maintained in accordance with applicable data integrity, security, privacy, and safety regulations, including the provision of duplicates or backup copies of electronic records.
- Agency personnel shall review periodically all existing forms and reports (both those originated by the agency and those responded to by the agency but originated by another agency or branch of government) to determine if they need to be improved or canceled.

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- Information systems managers shall maintain electronic records in a cost effective manner that allows the information to be retrieved quickly and reliably.
- System managers shall review electronic files and records regularly to determine that records are complete and that standards for accuracy, integrity, security and privacy are adequate.
- Employees electronic working files or temporary records shall be filed separately from Agency's official files.

4. Disposal and Archiving of Temporary and Permanent Records.

- Unauthorized destruction or disposition of temporary or permanent records is prohibited by law, including those created and maintained on electronic media.
- Records no longer current or active shall be retired and archived in conformance to Federal and FEMA guidelines. Electronic records shall be converted to an appropriate format and transmitted with appropriate labels.
- Electronic records shall conform to the standards and controls for creating, maintaining, using, disseminating, preserving, and disposing of FEMA records as set by the Operations Support Directorate.
- Employees may request transfers of records to other Federal Agencies.
- No FEMA employee may remove classified records, including copies of classified documents.
- Employees shall eliminate unnecessary duplicative or outdated convenience files, including those on electronic media in a timely manner.
- Departing officials and employees shall contact the FEMA Records Officer and request a review of materials proposed for removal from FEMA, including any material on electronic media.
- The Records Officer shall be informed of any threatened loss or removal of official records.